

Glenda Wiles

From: Toddy Perryman [toddyapat@bitterroot.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 24, 2008 10:04 AM
To: comments-northern-bitterroot@fs.fed.us
Cc: Glenda Wiles
Subject: travel management plan comments

RECEIVED**FEB 25 2008****Ravalli County Commissioners**

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Dan Ritter
 Stevensville District Ranger
 Bitterroot National Forest

Mr. Ritter,

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Travel Management Plan for the Bitterroot area. We have lived in the Bitterroot Valley for over 20 years and have seen many changes come about in that time. We have enjoyed hiking and skiing and climbing in the Bitterroot mountains and want to continue to be able to do so without conflicts with ORV and snowmobile use. We also very much value seeing wildlife in the areas we use. We feel that the presence of machines in these areas will discourage the presence of wildlife.

We have hiked frequently on the Little St. Joseph and St. Joseph peak area, St. Mary's peak, Bear Creek trails, Mill Creek, Blodgett, Canyon Creek, Lost Horse, Camas Creek, Como Peaks, El Capitain, Trapper Peak trails, areas in the Sapphires and many more. We have enjoyed many hours and days of quiet in the backcountry of the Bitterroot Valley. We would like to continue to have quiet use of the trails in the Selway/Bitterroot and the Sapphire Mountains.

We feel that the designation of trails for quiet use and roads for motorized use would be generally acceptable for us. This would result in the least conflict between motorized and non-motorized users, disrupt wildlife the least, and prevent further spread of noxious weeds into unroaded areas. These are important issues to us. We feel that the use of ORVs leads to more erosion than foot or horse-back travel. Therefore, we strongly support the exclusion of motorized use from areas of sensitive, easily-eroded soils. Motorized use on these trails will lead to ruts and gullies, impact watersheds, water quality, streams and fisheries.

We especially would like to see non-motorized designation for trails (and possibly also roads) adjacent to and/or leading into Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, and Roadless Areas. These areas are needed as buffer zones around the Wilderness Areas, to prevent the machine noise and pollution from entering the Wilderness Areas. Also, it could be that the motorized users may not see or attend to the signs of the Wilderness Area boundary, and would enter the W.A. inappropriately. This is especially negative when it happens frequently in a W.S.A., as it may jeopardize that area's ability to qualify for Wilderness designation. We are especially interested in seeing protection for the trails #39 and #313 in the Sapphire W.S.A. and the historic Nez Perce trail (currently named State Line Trail #106.)

We would also urge you to designate the Easthouse National Recreation Trail (#313) and the Palisade National Recreation Trail (#44 and #86) as non-motorized. These are in the Stony Mountain Roadless Area.

As taxpayers, we are concerned about the high cost of maintaining the roads and trails, and ask that you consider decommissioning roads that are not used or needed for managing the Forest. This would reduce the backlog of maintenance issues that results from the excessive number of roads into the Forest. It will also be important to establish an enforcement system for the closures that helps people understand the importance of respecting the closures.

We believe in keeping a properly maintained system of roads for motorized use and preserving traditional and historic trails for quiet uses. This will reduce conflicts, improve watersheds and fisheries, and increase opportunities to view and hunt wildlife. Again, we believe that roads are for motors, and trails are for quiet use.

2/25/2008

Thank you for your attention to these details.

Sincerely,

Toddy Perryman and Patrick Leonard
1525 Silver Sage Ln.
Corvallis, MT 59828

2/25/2008